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Editorial

A very important issue this time, one filled more with feature articles than the usual columns.

Mike Sawyer has contributed a piece which I feel is a masterpiece of research. Finally the CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED story is told. I don't care whether you like the books or not; YOU MUST READ THIS PIECE. It provides an inside look at a often-maligned, more often-ignored part of the comics industry.

Tom Hegeman is back again this issue with the first in a six part series on comics and the courts. All you fanzine editors and publishers out there take notes: you may need it when Disney comes knocking at your door. Me, I'm hiring Tom as my attorney. They've already been at my door. (Don't get me wrong...I'm not paranoid. It's just that they're out to get me.)

I was at CREATION in November, and I must say Gary Berman and Adam Malin put on one hell of a con. I won't go into the dealers' situation; we all know by now who shows up at the New York cons and what their "prices" are. The important part of CREATION was programming and it was excellent. Good films (announced well in advance) good panels, good planning. For those of you who have given up on Seuling's New York (or wherever) ventures, give CREATION a shot. It's well worth it. (There will be cons in March and May. Check the latest TBG for details.)

Stan Lee was at CREATION, and his remarks are recorded here for posterity. Lee is the first superstar personality to come out of comics, and if you've never heard him, the best way to describe him is: he talks like he writes. And even though he often sounds pompous in his "Soapbox", he comes off intelligently and sincerely in person. His comments make very interesting reading.

SUPERMAN VS. MUHAMMED ALI arrived in the mail today, and I feel it deserves comment. You may not agree with what I have to say about it, but I hope you do read it. And let me know what your comments are, it only costs 13¢. The address is: 324 Rowe St., Tamaqua, Pa., 18252.

While I'm on the subject, I have yet to receive one letter of comment from anyone, on the new PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM. I feel I must be doing something right: Ben informs me that the print run has jumped from 200 to 300 copies per issue. But whether I'm doing right or wrong, let me know. Being 300 miles away from Pittsburgh keeps me a little out of touch.

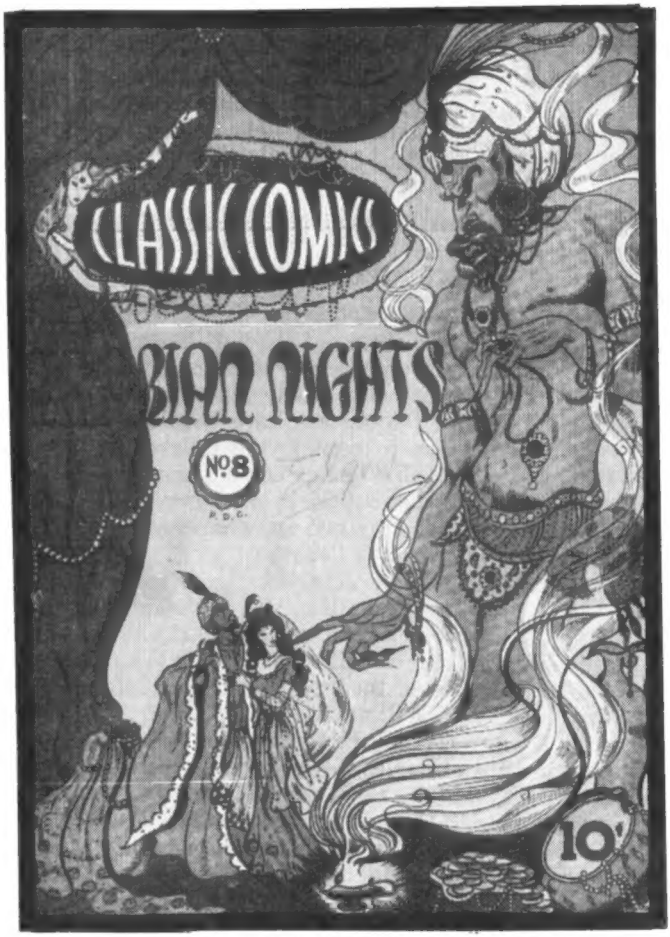
I will be at PITTCON in April and the two CREATIONs in March and May. If you see me don't be afraid to come up and say hello. If Ben will allow it, I would like to hold a panel at PITTCON on the Fan Press in general and PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM in particular. So, if you have any comments save them til then.

And I'll see you all in April.

GARY

by Michael Sawyer

The Classics: the forgotten comic



AN IN-DEPTH LOOK
AT A FORGOTTEN SERIES
OF COMICS

INTRODUCTION

When Mark Lerer first approached me in the fall of 1976 to take over PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM for him upon his entry into the hallowed halls of Princeton, little did I know that I'd be publishing a piece of this size and importance. According to the author of the piece, Michael Sawyer, this is the first time the full inside story of CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED has been told. I am proud to have this fine piece of research as a part of this issue of PFF and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I did. Let us know. All comments will be forwarded to the author.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although the following is not the complete history of the Gilberton Company, it does answer questions that have been asked by many on this topic. Of course, I could not have done this alone. I am in debt to the following people who provided inside information about the operation which could not be obtained anywhere:

Ron Prager
S. M. Jerry Iger
Mike Kanter
(brother of the late founder)
Hal Kanter
(son of the late founder)
William Johnson
Dick Bransfield
Charles Heffelfinger
Bob Dane

Although I did search through the literature, it was these people who helped provide missing information needed to finish this project. Lastly I would like to thank Ben Pondexter and Gary Sassaman for allowing me to pursue this ambitious project and providing PITTSBURGH FAN FORUM as an outlet for it.

In the beginning...

In November, 1941, The Classics Comics issue of THE THREE MUSKETEERS appeared. This comic was unique because it presented the famous novel in an illustrated format. The man responsible for this new production was Albert Lewis Kanter, who founded and ran the Gilberton Company. Many have wanted to know the story behind this series of books. For the first time this story will be told, based on research I have done. Naturally not every question will be answered, but it will hopefully help answer many questions that have been raised.

Albert Lewis Kanter, born April 13, 1897 in Baranovitch, Russia, was the first son of Henry and Ila (Mirsky) Kanter. In 1904, his parents and two brothers came to the United States and settled in Nashua, New Hampshire. Although he attended school, he never went to college. However he was a serious student of literature, biography, and history.

He became an American citizen in 1907 when his father became a naturalized citizen (at that time, if one member of the family became a citizen, everyone else in the family became citizens).

He moved to Savannah, Georgia where he was a salesman of notions, novelties, and cooking utensils. He married Rose Ehrenrich in 1917 and later had two sons and one daughter. Around 1925, he moved to Miami where he was a real estate broker, and he remained there until around 1933 or 1934. The stock market had crashed and land prices had dropped. This situation forced him to find a job that would enable him to support his family. He returned to New York, where his brothers and uncle assisted in relocating him.

Prior to CLASSICS, Kanter was a publisher's representative for Colonial Press and a traveling salesman. He was also associated with Elliot Publishing where he was selling varieties of surplus books. He also manufactured and sold a toy telegraph set, battery operated, which any child could operate. In addition, the Aldan Manufacturing Company also manufactured his invention, the crystal radio set, a once popular instrument for receiving radio broadcasts.

An example of the original CLASSICS cover and format.

Kanter became concerned because his children were reading comic books and neglecting the rich literature that was on the shelves. He was basically a self-educated man and greatly appreciated literature, especially that of the 19th century. Exactly when he conceived the idea for CLASSICS COMICS is not known, but he had discussed it for sometime with a friend who commuted with him on the Long Island Railroad. (He lived in Long Beach at the time and commuted daily to Manhatten.) His fellow commuter was Raymond Haas, who liked Kanter's idea and provided the bulk of the financing. There were two other men that put up some money but their names have been forgotten. Their shares were minor but helpful in making Kanter's dream come true.

The reason for the name Gilberton Company has never been fully explained. Rumor has it that because Kanter was Jewish and there was strong Anti-Semetic feeling at the time, he felt that he needed a WASP name in order to sell his product. (Supposedly one of his backers had a son named Gilbert.) Regardless of how the name of the company came about, it was his desire to fight comics in a different way: make them educational.

He hired artist Malcolm Kildale to adapt and illustrate THE THREE MUSKETEERS, which appeared in November 1941. The cost of producing the first issue was roughly $8,000 and there were 200,000 original issues available to the public. It was not his intention to have the comic replace the original, rather, "He merely wanted to place the original books in a form more accessible to a generation that was then beginning to recoil from linearity of printed matter into more immediate, less cerebral mediums" The selling of this new comic was a success and after making sure it would sell, Kanter published them on a regular basis.

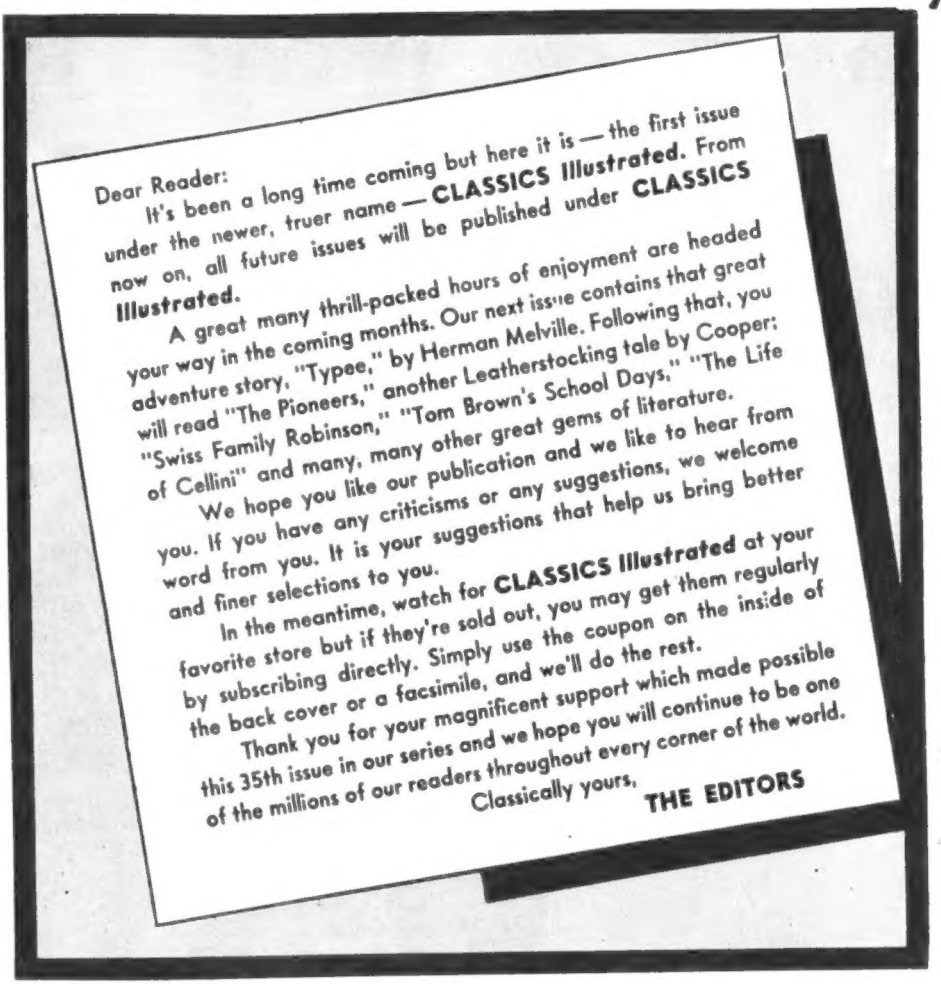
The first twelve issues each contained 64 pages. However, because of the war, there was a paper shortage which resulted in rising paper costs. The industries that used paper were placed on a quota system. Because of this situation, Kanter was forced to reduce his comics to 56 pages (but at 10¢ that was still a bargain). Also interesting is that Kanter did not have any advertisements other than what was available from his own company. It is reasonable to assume that he wanted the story to be read without any interruptions.

Knowing that without paper he could not continue his business, Kanter asked around to see if he could buy other publishers' unused paper. He was able to do this and that is why there are different printers listed on the CLASSICS series. Also, he was able to profit from the war. He noticed that soldiers enjoyed reading comics and found a market for over 40 million copies of his comics through army post exchanges, the American Red Cross, and STARS AND STRIPES (the unofficial publication for the armed forces in the European command).

After the war, Kanter was able to increase his production. While issuing new CLASSICS, he reprinted the earlier ones. It would seem that these comics were made to be collected. At the same time, he bought out his partners so that it would be a family-owned business. He had high hopes that his two sons would take over when he had to step down. Unfortunately, his oldest son had other ambitions and now works in Hollywood. He is Hal Kanter the noted script writer and producer. (Editor's note: if memory serves me right Kanter produced ALL IN THE FAMILY for at least one season, and has been very active in the Bob Hope specials.)

Kanter never advertized his products in newspapers. He had been a traveling salesman and found this was the best method to sell his product. At first the Publishers Distribution Company (PDC) was his distributor. However it was Curtis Company (located in Philadelphia) that approached him and convinced him that they could help him. It turned out that the company could help and it was the best investment Kanter made. Curtis was able to have the CLASSICS distributed nationwide, including newsstands. Along with Curtis' help, Kanter was frequently a guest on radio and television discussing the CLASSICS. For example, he appeared on WABD (New York) on October 12, 1953, with Virginia Graham on "Food for Thought" discussing his product. Events of this nature helped stimulate sales.

The addition of S. M. Jerry Iger to Kanter's staff was an asset. Iger liked the idea of presenting educational material in popular form to appeal to young readers. He started in 1945 with OLIVER TWIST and stayed on until the mid fifties. He had complete control over adaptation, drawing, and editing of all CLASSICS supplied to his studio. It was because of Iger that Kanter



Dear Reader:

It's been a long time coming but here it is — the first issue under the newer, truer name — **CLASSICS Illustrated.** From now on, all future issues will be published under **CLASSICS Illustrated.**

A great many thrill-packed hours of enjoyment are headed your way in the coming months. Our next issue contains that great adventure story, "Typee," by Herman Melville. Following that, you will read "The Pioneers," another Leatherstocking tale by Cooper; "Swiss Family Robinson," "Tom Brown's School Days," "The Life of Cellini" and many, many other great gems of literature.

We hope you like our publication and we like to hear from you. If you have any criticisms or any suggestions, we welcome word from you. It is your suggestions that help us bring better and finer selections to you.

In the meantime, watch for **CLASSICS Illustrated** at your favorite store but if they're sold out, you may get them regularly by subscribing directly. Simply use the coupon on the inside of the back cover or a facsimile, and we'll do the rest.

Thank you for your magnificent support which made possible this 35th issue in our series and we hope you will continue to be one of the millions of our readers throughout every corner of the world.

Classically yours,

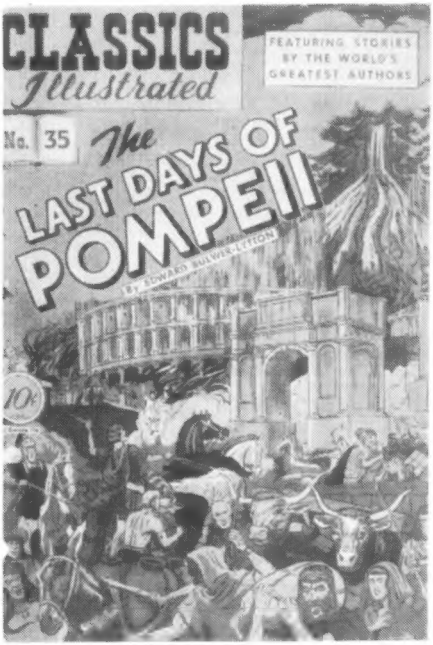
THE EDITORS

The original letter explaining why the series changed its name from CLASSICS COMICS to CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED.

hired famous illustrators for the CLASSICS such as: Henry C. Kiefer, Alek Blum, Robert Webb, and others. The artists were picked to do a certain story by the type of work they specialized in and this was the key to the company's success in producing high quality comics.

In 1947, Kanter changed the name of the series, known to this time as simply CLASSICS COMICS. It was felt that these classics were not comics but rather illustrated versions of original masterpieces. In issues 33 and 34, the publisher informed the reader of the impending change, for which they credited the reader. When issue 35 came out (THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII), it carried the new title CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED, a name considered more fitting for these comics. From my research, only one source other than the comic book itself mentioned this change and that was PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY.

Also, it was during this period that classics appeared in the newspapers. Actually it was called ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS, and it was a supplement to the newspaper. Four newspapers are known to have carried the supplement: NEWARK STAR-LEDGER, NEW



The first issue to be called CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED.

YORK POST, CHICAGO SUN, and MILWAUKEE JOURNAL. The importance of these supplements are that they are rare & priceless and they contained art work that never appeared in the comic book series. They were usually in four installments of 16 pages per installment, which equaled 64 pages when the story was completed. This is unusal as the comic books were putting out 56 page stories. The stories that appeared in the newspaper version were:

KIDNAPPED
THE SPY
TOM SAWYER
HOUSE OF SEVEN GABLES
MILES STANDISH
TOILERS OF THE SEA
SILAS MARNER
ALICE IN WONDERLAND
MAN IN THE IRON MASK
A CHRISTMAS CAROL
JULIUS CAESAR
20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA
THE LADY OF THE LAKE
and
DAVID COPPERFIELD.

The newspaper classics died out in March, 1948, one year after their first appearance in print.

Although ratings were made on comics, it is doubtful that Kanter paid much attention to them. Nevertheless, they appeared and it is presumed that the first one on the CLASSICS appeared in THE CATHOLIC LIBRARY WORLD (XX), 1948, by Louis A. Rongoine, who listed them under the "white list" (acceptable). Whether it was thoroughly examined by Mr. Rongione is not known as the CLASSICS were later to be attacked for several reasons, particularly on charges of being too violent.

Paper cost continued to rise and Kanter was forced to reduce the number of pages again, from 56 to 48. Many CLASSICS were prepared in advance with 56 pages and cuts had to be made. There were around 100 pages that never made into print, and they are considered to be collectors' items.

The reverberating fifties...

During the fifties, Kanter's Gilberton Company experienced both its high and low points. Actually, it was two different eras. The first five years were the initial years with 1950 and 1951 being the crucial years; the second five years were when the company had success in sales and awards. It would be worthwhile to examine each period seperately.

In February, 1950, JULIUS CAESAR (issue 68) appeared and was received with mixed emotions from the public. While many appreciated that Shakespeare's work could be illustrated, others scorned this and cried that it was raping some of the greatest literature ever written. Kanter paid no attention to the negative reaction as he felt this was a significant feat, for now ancient works could be illustrated without destroying the original versions. The primary reason why this version was issued was in the hope of loosening the hold of television and SUPERMAN on countless young minds. With the cooperation of New York University, JULIUS CAESAR

was able to be illustrated and the cost for producing this issue was $11,000. There were hopes of doing RICHARD III in the spring of 1951 (which never materialized) and HAMLET (which appeared in issue 99).

In March, FAST FICTION (later renamed FAMOUS AUTHORS) started to publish their versions of classic adaptations and it cut into Gilberton's sales. However Seaboard's publication began to wane and Gilberton bought them out in 1951. Until they did, Seaboard's FAST FICTION/FAMOUS AUTHORS was the only serious competition Gilberton had.

In April, the words "Now that you have read the CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED edition, don't miss the added enjoyment of reading the original, obtainable at your school or public library" appeared. Kanter inserted this starting with issue 70, because he feared that those who read the comics would never "experience the pleasure of reading the full length movels on which the abbreviated comic versions were based". This injunction had a dual role: one, it did inspire the reader to read the orginals; and two, he tried to silence critics who claimed he was butchering the literature.

Gilberton attempted to do two new series entitled: CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED GIANTS and CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED EDUCATIONAL SERIES which were both failures when it came to sales. Of the two, the introduction of the former was a puzzle. Each one consisted of four CLASSICS issues in one giant volume. Was the purpose of this issue to stimulate sales of earlier issue reprints or make them available for those who missed the earlier issues? No one seems to know the reasons for the appearance of this series.

In the spring of 1951, there was a flood in New York and rumor had that some plates were destroyed resulting from the flood. This is not true as the flood did not effect the Brooklyn plant located on Ralph Avenue where all the printing was done.

PARENTS' MAGAZINE also came out with their ratings on comics. In examining their ratings, CLASSICS appeared several times. The first time was in 1951 when they gave the series an "A" rating (acceptable), but apparently they had not looked through it thoroughly, as the next rating was less than acceptable. In November, 1951, they rated issue 68 and gave it a "B" rating (some objection). This was probably due to the fact that they did appreciate Shakespeare's work being illustrated. However in November, 1952, they gave CLASSICS a "C" rating (objectionable). It is now suspected that they had examined the series carefully and found it sometimes contained violence. To understand this problem, the reader needs to be informed of what was happening during this time period.

By 1950, there was a crusade, brought about largely by Dr. Fredric Wertham, to eliminate comics that contained violence, because they supposedly were a cause of juvenile delinquency. Articles appeared and hearings were held on this topic condemning the use of violence in comic books. Ultimately, the Comics Code Authority was created to screen comics so that the good could be seperated from the bad. If the Board approved the comic, it would grant it a seal, and parents knew that this comic was "safe" for their child.

While this was going on, Gilberton changed their cover format and raised their price. Prior to March, 1951, the covers were line-drawn and the price was 10¢. The new cover format included paintings which provided a more realistic image, and the price of the comic rose to 15¢. Although the purpose of the cover changes were to stimulate sales, Kanter also wanted to create a new image. It should be STRONGLY pointed out here that no one told him how to run his business and the crusade against violence in comics had nothing to do with his decision. Jim Sands' theory of Wertham forcing Gilberton to remove certain CLASSICS because of violence

is not true. The reason that issue 14, 20, 21, 33,40, 43, 44, 66, 73, and 74 were removed was that they did not sell. There was an over-run of issue 53 and it was always available if one ordered it from the company, even though it was not on the list.

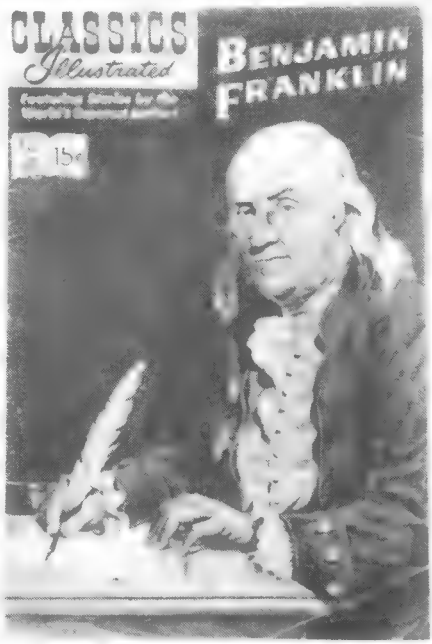
The new image was supposed to render the CLASSICS as a cultured comic, and make them more closely reflect the original version. Also the violence was toned down and the whole purpose was to have these comics become attractive to everyone, not just children. Earlier, he used the violence as a gimmick to sell his product and it was at this time that he felt a change was needed.

There were two publishers, both firmly established in the comics industry, that never joined the Comics Code Authority: Dell and Gilberton. As mentioned before, Kanter felt he did not need anyone to tell him how to run his business, and he also knew his comics were good enough to sell. In addition, his comics were genuinely educational, something few publishers could boast. At any rate, his sales backed up his philosophy and when these two firms failed to join the CCA it showed that the Authority lacked the power one would have expected from a committee that was supposed to regulate an entire industry.

The last known major attack on the CLASSICS appeared in THE REPORT OF THE NEW YORK STATE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE STUDYING THE PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF OBJECTIONABLE AND OBSCENE MATERIALS (March, 1956, Legislative Document 32). Here the committee attacked the use of violence in issue 18 (THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME) because of the illustration of torture. The committee went on to say that Gilberton never joined the Comics Magazine Association of America, and, as indicated in the 1955 report of this committee, continued to circulate comic books replete with pictorial scenes of terror and torture.

What does this all add up to? Nothing, really. Kanter never paid any attention to Dr. Wertham or to any other group or committee demanding him to stop producing violent comics. True, he made some changes BEFORE the attack. However it must still be emphasized that he did it on his own.

By 1955, things were looking good for Gilberton. Kanter had decided to expand and publish other titles. In 1953, he added CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED JUNIOR, which illustrated children's fairy tales, and was successful during the late fifties. In the same year PICTURE PROGRESS was introduced but after two years it proved not to be a saleable item and was withdrawn from the market. These were sold to schools in yearly subscription form, much like M. C. Gaines had sold the DC/EC PICTURE STORIES... series in the forties. As with Gaines' earlier endeavor, Kanter failed to interest enough educators in his monthly product and insufficent sales caused the series to fold in its third



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN winner of the 1955 Thomas Alva Edison Award in the category of American History

year. Then it was decided to print special issues that would be published bianually. They were not as successful as was hoped for, but they did appeal to the public.

Another short lived series was THE BEST FROM BOYS' LIFE that folded in 1958, one year after it started. In that same year THE WORLD AROUND US series began and was successful for three years until Gilberton ran into financial problems and discontinued the series.

Along with these new comics, Kanter won awards for producing the CLASSICS. From 1955 to 1958, Gilberton Company won six Thomas Alva Edison Awards, plus a joint citation with Dell Publishing for producing wholesome comics in 1957. Exactly how many awards the company won is not known, but there were a number of them for producing educational comics.

During the peak years, Gilberton was only reprinting CLASSICS that were popular, like MOBY DICK, THE THREE MUSKETEERS, and when movies came out of stories that had appeared in the CLASSICS series, the stands had an abundant supply of these issues, in hopes that the kids would purchase them after seeing the movie. It was not as successful as they had hoped. Nevertheless, Gilberton was generally experiencing prosperous times and the setbacks during this period did not discourage them. Rather difficulties ENCOURAGED them to find other avenus to print successful comics.

The decaying sixties...

After 1962, Gilberton stopped publication of CLASSICS. Issue 167 was the last regular edition. Numbers 168 and 169 were published six years later. By that time, Gilberton suffered money problems, and was only reprinting CLASSICS titles that would sell. Beside the CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED and CLASSICS JUNIOR titles, only the PICTURE PROGRESS was reprinted. But what caused Gilberton to be in financial trouble? Certainly it did not happen overnight. It is worthwhile to examine the problems that caused Kanter to eventually sell Gilberton Company to Twin Circle Publishing.

The loss of Jerry Iger hurt. Iger had left in the early fifties. Without his editorship the CLASSICS lost the fine work that was produced at his studio.

It has been stated by a reliable source that Kanter did not pay the artists well and demanded a lot from them.

Later works became sloppy and the artists were free lancing. The high quality of the earlier CLASSICS was gone.

The introduction and mass marketing of the paperback book made the original novels much easier and less expensive to buy.

Students were now able to buy other forms of book condensations for review purposes.

The continuing rise of paper and printing costs.

Perhaps the two more important reasons are:

The rise of television. This caused many people, including adults, to lose interest in reading anything.

Dealers often returned the CLASSICS unopened. Gilberton had to pay the shipping charges and lost money when this happened. The dealers sometimes refused to display the books in their stores, because the profits were small.

In an attempt to overcome these problems, Kanter published a new magazine entitled THE MONTH in 1962. It was to succeed CORONET and to be published monthly. It lasted for two months (February & March). He also started his own crossword puzzle

magazine, MERITS, which is still being published by Penny Press. One other attempt to publish a magazine came in 1967, when he tried DID JUSTICE TRIUMPH? for three issues. (Artist George Evans has mentioned that Gilberton published a PERRY MASON comic, but no one else seems to know anything about it.)

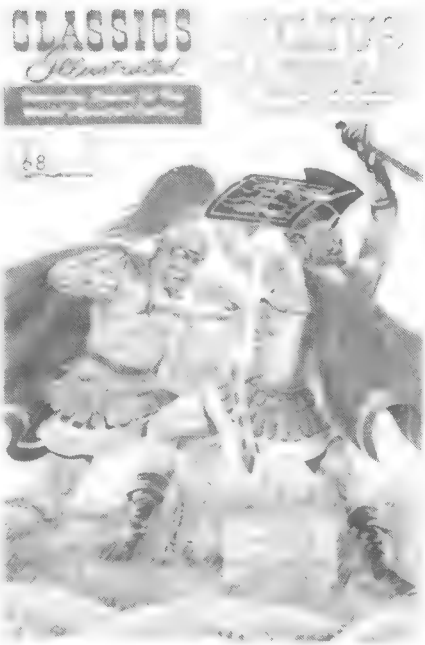
Finally Twin Circle Publishing Company purchased everything from Albert Kanter for a price in six figures. Kanter had put his company up for sale about two years before Pat Frawley decided to purchase the CLASSICS. To understand the situation, the reader has to know a brief background of Twin Circle.

With Frawley backing, Father Dan Lyons started the Twin Circle Publishing Company in 1965. Then in 1967, he convinced Frawley that there should be a national Catholic weekly magazine, which was eventually called TWIN CIRCLE. It was then Frawley decided to purchase the CLASSICS. He wanted to insert a comic with each newspaper so that the latter would sell. It was originally suggested that he arrange to purchase the printed comics from Gilberton but he wanted to purchase the entire company. When the CLASSICS became the property of Twin Circle, Kanter and a few others were kept on the payroll. Kanter had a five-year contract with TC as consultant.

Twin Circle now had their inserted CLASSICS but ran afoul with the post office. There is an obscure postal regulation that says nothing can be included with a paper if it is for sale apart from the paper. After losing the appeal in Washington, D. C., they decided to print one third of each story in the newspaper itself.

The later CLASSICS after 1968, had new and heavier covers. This was done so Frawley could raise the price from 15¢ to 25¢. Also at this time issues 168 and 169 appeared. These were the last new CLASSICS ever to be printed.

Twin Circle had several problems in trying to publish and sell the CLASSICS. Since Frawley was in Los



Note the Twin Circle logo on this one.

Angeles, and the CLASSICS in New York, Twin Circle would have to pay to have them shipped because the dealers did not have to pay unless they sold them. Since many dealers returned the CLASSICS unopened at Frawley's expense, only the truckers were making any money.

Ideally, they had to reprint 100,000 copies of each issue to stay afloat. Printing and paper costs were still rising and since the CLASSICS were not in heavy demand, this was another reason why they were forced to shut down.

Frawley got fed up with the high cost of producing and storing the CLASSICS. The last printing was in March of 1972. The original plates of all 167 CLASSICS are in a warehouse in New York, and for a while CLASSICS were available at 2½¢ wholesale for those who wanted to sell them on their own. After thirty years on the market, CLASSICS finally died. A year later, their creator, Albert Lewis Kanter, suffered a fatal heart attack. When he passed away the reamining record of the company passed with him.

What the future holds...

No doubt as the years roll by, the CLASSICS will become more and more valuable. To have the complete run of all the originals, reprints, and changed covers is extremely rare but there are at least a half dozen collectors who do, and about a half dozen more on the verge of joining this elite group. For several years, issue 43 (GREAT EXPECTATIONS) has been branded as the rarest of them all. This is not true as there are many copies of this issue available. The real rare issues are issue 1 and issue 26 (FRANKENSTEIN). Very rarely does one see these advertized for sale. It remains to be seen how much the CLASSICS collectors are willing to pay as the prices are rising to a point not affordable to most collectors.

There are two other classics series being put out now. One is MARVEL CLASSICS which started in 1976.They still publish titles that were used in the CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED series, and for this reason, Marvel has turned off some of the collectors. Their artwork is far below the quality of the Gilberton CLASSICS, BUT they do adapt the book better than Gilberton did. Rumors have it that Marvel is having trouble selling the series and just how long it will last is not known. It is believed that if Marvel could produce titles never published by Gilberton, they would increase their sales. All Marvel does now is make the original CLASSICS more valuable.

The other classic adaptation title now available is KING CLASSICS, which can only be obtained by schools and libraries. They have sixteen titles out so far and the quality is much higher than Marvel. These comics are designed for slow readers, as well as to entertain the youngsters with the hope that they will read the orginals. When CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED went out of business, the demand for adaptations became strong. During the fifties and sixties some educators scorned the CLASSICS line, but when it was learned that students weren't reading the novels in their original form, CLASSICS

ILLUSTRATED became popular again, but too late to save Gilberton. Thus, the creation of KING CLASSICS. Their style can be compared to British comics and the illustrations are close to the original version of the novel. However King Features are slow in importing and distributing these European-produced classics. Obtaining information about them has been difficult. It remains to be seen how long they will last.

Finally, there is talk that the classics may reappear in the newspapers. Right now, there are eight major newspapers that carry adaptations of currently popular novels under the title of BEST SELLER SHOWCASE. Father Lyons is trying to convince Pat Frawley to publish CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED in newspapers. The fans of CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED can only hope.

FOOTNOTES

1. Lenny Kaye, "Classics Illustrated", CLASSICS COLLECTORS CLUB NEWSLETTER. April, 1972, page 6.

2. NEW YORK TIMES. March 9, 1950, page 24.

The fight of the centu

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When I first heard about SUPERMAN VS. MUHAMMED ALI, I cringed. Not visibly, just a little tightening in my stomach. You know the feeling.

Originally...a long time ago in a galaxy far away (New York), Julius Schwartz jokingly said what a match Superman vs. Muhammed Ali would be.

And they were off and running.

At first it was going to be Joe Kubert doing the artwork. Interesting, I thought, very interesting. But Kubert was too involved elsewhere, mainly his school. And Neal Adams got the job.

Now we all know Neal Adams. He has no sense of time. He knows not what a calendar is. I have tremendous respect and admiration for Adams' work. He is one of a handful of men in the comics industry that can be called innovators.

Well, sir, a year passes. Deadlines are missed. (Where there any deadlines put on Adams?) It will be out at Thanksgiving. It'll be out at Christmas. It'll be on the stands by the first of the year.

And now here it sits before me. Waiting to be ripped apart.

But I'm not going to do that.

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like it. No...I'll go her than that. I love has all the markings classic story in any lia. Everything but a romance (excluding Lane of course.)

he plot goes as follows: alien race known as Scrubb has plan to (a.) roy, or (b.) enslave the h unless the earth's mpion beats the ubb champion. Mu- mmed Ali (who Clark t, Lois Lane, and

Gary Sassaman

Review and Opinion

mmy Olsen just happen be interviewing when head Scrubb makes challenge) argues h Superman that he uld be earth's champ- since he's earth-born. perman argues that he uld be the champ, en though he isn't rth-born. Seems he's a izen of all nations, ving been naturalized the United Nations. Gentlemen, gentlemen, 're not getting anywhere. The alien is giving us 24 earth hours to pick the champ. So what is left but to slug it out (fisticuffs, Marquis de Queensbury rules, of course).

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...

I'm sure you know the rest. Who wins? I'm not going to tell you. You find out. You read it. Me, I'm going to talk a bit about Neal Adams.

I'm convinced that Neal Adams is THE Superman artist. Curt Swan is good, Garcia-Lopez is very good and Siegel and Schuster were excellent with their somewhat limited version. But Adams is the only artist who can present Superman with all the raw power, all the majesty, all the SUPER in Superman. He looks like a Superman, he acts like a Superman, HE IS SUPERMAN. Adams gives the strip the missing element.

Superman isn't my favorite character. He never was, he probably never will be. There's something so limiting about a hero who can do everything. How do you kill him? How do you hurt him? How do you fight him? How the hell do you write for him? Why even think of such things?

lising gimmick of the year?

CAN YOU SPOT THE TELEVISION WATCHING THE GREATEST FIGHT OF ALL TIME AND SPACE!
THE FIGHT TO SAVE EARTH FROM STAR-WARRIORS
SUPERMAN VS.

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Okay so I won't.

Muhammed Ali is as much apart of legend as he is reality. He is quite possibly the Superman of the sixties and seventies, and I find myself wondering who history will be kinder to. I guess it's only natural that the two would meet.

And meet they do. And slug it out. And, lo and behold, someone actually wins.

But I'm still not going to tell you who.

The art is beautiful. It's Adams, Giordano, and Austin at their best. The story, which Adams wrote from a plot by Denny O'Neil, is full of humor, action, and suspense, with a few surprises thrown in for good measure. If this sounds like a cop-out, forgive me. But I really feel it's hard to talk about the story in any but general terms with out giving too much away. I want you to be as pleasantly surprised as I was.

Let's do it this way...remember SUPERMAN VS. SPIDER-MAN? Forget it. There's a new kid in town.

The only real gripe I have is about the paper. When I first heard that DC was contemplating using a higher grade paper for the book, I was very pleased. Visions of brightly colored superheroes on clean, white, shiny paper danced through my head. I didn't expect cover stock or anything...just the same paper that Marvel had used in their KISS and CONAN SUPER SPECIALS.

I didn't get it. The printing is excellent but the paper is still that good old, dull, lifeless newsprint, albeit a very good grade of newsprint, better than the kind used in regular comics. But if you want to see the way things could have been, compare the inside back cover with the page opposite it. See what I mean?

Otherwise the book is a gem. 1978 is going to be the year of the Superman. And this is just the first installment.

So which is it? The Fight of the Century? Or the Merchandising Gimmick of the Year?

The answer is simple.

It's both. And everyone at DC should be commended for making it that.

From the files of Bob Youhouse

MEDIA REPORT

Here's the lastest information on STAR TREK.

In November of 1977, the first STAR TREK Fotonovel came out, "The City on the Edge of Forever". This was followed by "Where No Man Has Gone Before", STAR TREK Fotonovel no. 2. Also in November: STAR TREK no. 12 by James Blish with J. A. Lawrence.

In December STAR TREK Fotonovel no. 3 "The Trouble With Tribbles" came out.

In January, 1978, no. 4: "A Taste of Armageddon" and STAR TREK: THE NEW VOYAGES by Sondra Marshak and Myrna Culbreath.

In February, 1978, no. 5: "Metamorphosis".

Meanwhile over at Marvel:

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN—A BOOK OF COLORS AND DAYS OF THE WEEK by Donna Kelly from Golden Press (39¢).

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN from Golden Press with Spider-man fighting Dr. Octopus on the cover (59¢).

THE FANTASTIC FOUR MEET THE WITCH a Whitman coloring book (39¢).

Recently, at Carnegie Lecture Hall in Oakland, the movie NOSFERATU was shown. This movie was accompanied by music on the piano. It was directed by F. W. Murnau. Screenplay by Henrik Galeen, based on the novel DRACULA by Bram Stoker. Art Director: Albin Grau. Photography by Fritz Arno Wagner. Cast: Max Schreck, Gustav von Wagnerheim, Greta Schroeder, Alexander Granich, and Max Nemetz.

Jonathan Harker made his trip to Nosferatu leaving his sweetheart Nina behind. This story took place in 1838. As early as 1443 there had been news about vampires. As Jonathan enters the castle, he notices a clock encased in glass with a skeleton on top.

There are several memorable moments in the film: The vampire carrying his cofin in a canoe; the vampire rising from the coffin in the hold of the ship stiff as a board; the vampire disappearing; loading coffins onto horse drawn carts and then going into the coffin; the scene which the vampire dissolves into the light of morning.

After the film was over, people in the audience clapped for the film and the piano player. An enjoyable evening and it only cost a $1.00.

DAVE SIMS

Stan Lee at Creation

(On Sunday November 27, Stan Lee spoke to a packed room at CREATION. The following are excerpts from that talk.)

He was late. That's not uncommon I suppose, for a man in his position. But the fans were angry. One smile and a "Hello culture lovers" put them at ease.

The first thing Stan Lee talked about on that cold November day was the SILVER SURFER book he and Jack Kirby are doing for Simon and Schuster. At that time Lee had 40 of the 100 pages written. It was due on January 3 and as he put it: "The world of literature may not be denied this great book. I think we're going to make it." It'll be just like the old days...Kirby, Lee and Joe Sinnot inking.

Talking later about the SILVER SURFER, Lee revealed that originally the comic was written for older readers. When Martin Goodman suggested the book be written more simplistic for the younger audience sales, Lee decided to drop it. This new book , says Lee will be "The ultimate SILVER SURFER."

"It's like rewriting THE BIBLE. I have so many 'thou's' and 'shalts'. Everytime I write the SILVER SURFER, I have him talking more and more bliblical."

"For those of you who want to become artists, I finally finished the book HOW TO DRAW COMICS THE MARVEL WAY, which of course is the only way anybody wants to draw comics." The book is now out and is a must for any Marvel fan, budding artist or not.

In the Origins Book Series, Lee said the next book would be devoted to THE HULK. "Personally I think the world has enough HULK at the moment." Following that will be MARVEL'S GREATEST BATTLES."What they are God only knows," quipped Lee. After that Lee said he's open to suggestions. There could be MARVEL'S SECOND GREATEST BATTLES, MARVEL'S WORST BATTLES, MARVEL'S LONGEST BATTLES, MARVEL'S SHORTEST BATTLES. Lee figures he can go on forever.

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Stan then discussed the series of full-color paperbacks being put out by Pocket Books. "If you have good eyesight they're great books. I think they were done on microfilm and they forgot to enlarge them when they printed them." The next series to be started is , you guessed it, THE HULK.

Lee also announced that Simon and Schuster are planning to do a big book reprinting ALL the SPIDER-MAN daily and Sunday strips, and he imagines they'll do the same for HOWARD THE DUCK when the strip gets a little older.

On Marvel and other media, Lee concentrated on the recent explosion of characters on television. On the

SPIDER-MAN tv-movie, Lee said, "It wasn't as bad as it might have been, but it wasn't as good as it could have been." There were constant arguments and fights even after Lee was named consultant. It got to the point that Stan felt they were saying: "We said you could be the consultant, don't bother us." He felt that the scenes of Spidey climbing were great. But it was the wrong kind of plot, the wrong kind of villian. Also the show seemed too padded to him and he felt it should have been only an hour in length. CBS had approved 5 more scripts on the basis of a 32 share for the rating of the first show. Lee has read the second script (all 5 scripts are for one-hour shows) and didn't like that either.

Dan Goodman and Chuck Fries are the producers of SPIDER-MAN and Lee says they are starting to rely more on him as a consultant.

Stan then discussed the second Marvel hero to hit the little screen, THE HULK. Ol' Greenskin did very well the first time in the ratings. The second HULK movie which was to appear on November 28 was probably shot at the same time, Lee said. He didn't like either.

In the first one, according to Lee, the gravestone scene at the end was a compromise between him and the producers. He was also very dissatisfied with the make-up, something he thinks will be corrected in the future.

Stan read the second script and "...hated it. Here's THE HULK, the strongest guy on earth, and if truth be told, he's probably stronger than SUPERMAN..." Lee felt the villian was all wrong for the story.

Universal owns the rights to THE HULK and also purchased the following:

THE HUMAN TORCH. According to Stan this one will be really good. They've changed the premise a little; the hero is an ex-astronaut turned race car driver who works for the government. He says the special effects will be great with about 30 people working on them now. It will be done by the same people who do THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR MAN.

CAPTAIN AMERICA. Which also looks very good.

SUB-MARINER. Which has been temporarily shelved because of the failure of THE MAN FROM ATLANTIS. (This brought forth the first question from the audience: if THE MAN FROM ATLANTIS is being cancelled why did Marvel bring out a series on it? Lee replied that he felt ripped off when the series came out and when the producers approached him about doing a series from the show, he thought it would be a good way to get a few bucks back. As it is Marvel did not know the show would be cancelled when they signed the contracts. At that time the show in movie form was doing quite well.)

DR. STRANGE. Lee says this one will be "a big winner." Universal was so taken by the script that they commisioned a series of paintings to go along with it. The paintings are beautiful, but serve no real purpose, since no one will ever see them.

THOR.

IRON MAN.

MS. MARVEL.

HOWARD THE DUCK. "...they don't plan to do HOWARD as an animated film, they plan to do it live. I figure if they can just get Woody Allen to play HOWARD."

The question of control over the final tv product came up and Lee said that despite the three films which already aired, no contracts have been signed. The lawyers are still arguing. But he assured the audience that they were moving toward "much more control" and he was sure they'd get it.

Stan also announced that he now has an agent, so we may be seeing a lot more commercials with Stan Lee (he had done a Hathaway shirt ad for print media but the campaign was cancelled).

Lee also talked about the CONAN movie starring Arnold Schwartz-enegger of whom he said: "I hope he doesn't look too puny. Maybe if the guy exercises a little..." Roy Thomas and Ed

Summmers are doing the script.

Marvel is negotiating to buy an animation studio in Hollywood, "and it'll happen any day now..." to produce "our own" animated and eventually live-action films for both tv and movies.

Meanwhile back in the world that Marvel orginally became famous in, Stan announced a few new projects:

THE KINGDOM OF THE SPIDERS.

A movie adaptation based on a current release that got a very good write-up in VARIETY according to Stan.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND.

A $1.50 KISS-type book, based on the current hit movie.

A second KISS book and a similar BEATLES book and 3 or 4 others "...which I can't mention because there might be a DC spy or two here but I think they're really going to startle the industry."

Stan also said he would love to do a book on the SHOGUN warriors toys done by Mattel. This won't happen 'til they learn how to speak Japanese.

Stan said that while doing college lectures he is frequently asked the question "What were your biggest failures?" He said it used to be a hard question to answer since "we at Marvel are not programmed to failure." But he admitted that his biggest disappointment was in the PRISONER book. He still feels it would be one of the greatest comics ever made. Gil Kane tried it first and then Jack Kirby and neither of them could make it seem exciting. It was just a lot of faces and people walking aroung talking. So now there are two complete books sitting on the shelf. He did admit that there was probably only 1 person who could do it: "I think Steranko could probably do it magnificently" he said. But it will probably never see the light of day.

Stan also talked about:

BARRY SMITH. A definite soft spot in heart for Barry since he was one of Lee's discoveries. Smith progressed fasted than any other artist he ever knew. But he wanted to be an enterpeneur, he wanted to have control over his own work. Stan would love to have him back and thinks maybe Roy Thomas may have him working on a story now.

NEAL ADAMS. "Neal simply never makes a deadline. And you can't use guys like that when you're doing books like ours."

DON McGREGOR. "He seems to be working for us but I don't know what he is doing."

STEVE DITKO. Stan says he still doesn't know why Ditko left Marvel. He is "one of the best guys in the business" according to Lee. But towards the end of his tenure with the company he became more and more unfriendly to both Lee and Marvel.

"Will DC and Marvel ever team up again?" was asked. Lee replied: "I really don't think so...I think that once was about all the world could take. I don't know. You know, why should we teach them all our tricks?" Adam Malin took the question one step further and asked what would happen if one of the parent companies purchased the other. Lee said it probably would never happen and if it did a merger between the two comic publishing arms would probably make the government come down on them for anti-trust law violations. It would make them too big. But..."I think it would be fun for us to buy DC 'cause for years I have thought what I would like to do if we had those characters." But that's just a "pipe dream."

Lee actually wrote down several things to look into. He said "when anything is written in this book, IT HAPPENS!" He was shocked to find out that Nick Fury is not being used in any regular series. This convention, he said, will have caused "the rebirth of Nick Fury." He also wrote down THE ETERNALS ("Kirby will be happy."), KILLRAVEN, SON OF SATAN, and DEATHLOK. No character is ever really dead at Marvel, he assured the fans present.

All in all, Lee talked for over an hour. He was entirely at ease with the crowd and seemed to enjoy himself.

I know I did.

The Comic Fan Song

(Sung to the tune of
Monty Python's
"The Lumberjack Song")

By Keith Matteson
& Mark Lerer

chorus
I'm a comic fan and I'm okay,
Read all night and I loaf all day

I go to cons, I publish zines,
I like to bother pros.
I spend large sums of money,
and rarely change my clothes.

(chorus)

I go to cons, I try to draw,
I never answer mail.
I'd like to work for Marvel,
but haven't made a sale.

(chorus)

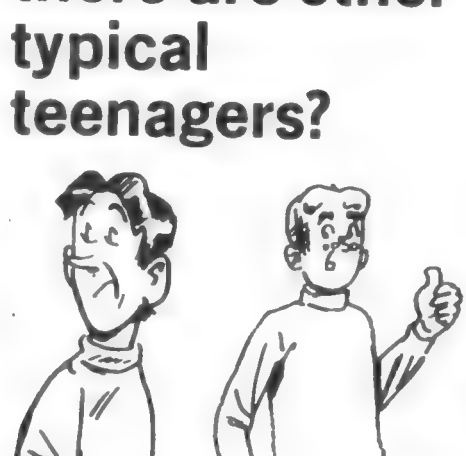
I eat cheap food, I hate Don Heck,
I live on comic books.
I wear my Howard button,
and get the strangest looks.

(chorus)

by Thomas Hegeman

Cartoons and the Courts Part One

Gee Archie, you mean there are other typical teenagers?



With this issue we begin a series of articles dealing, as the name would suggest with copyrights and comics. A study like this can be helpful in a number of ways.

It has a historical and curiosity interest. Most fans, for instance, know that DC sued Fawcett in the '50's and that as a result CAPTAIN MARVEL went into limbo. But do they know what reasons the court gave for agreeing with DC? We'll discuss that in future issues. You may have heard that a couple of years ago the Disney organization took a certain porno film to court for using the Mickey Mouse ears in one scene. But I'll bet not one reader knows how that came out. Not only will you find out, but you'll find out why you never heard the results before.

Another aspect is that, by reading the court decisions, one can see how comics, cartoons, etc. were regarded by at least one stratum of America at any given time. Almost all decisions contain a description of the comics and/or the characters and some may surprise you, if only for their quaintness.

Perhaps the most important reason is the amount of amateur publishing prevalent in fandom. I would bet that not one fan publisher in 100 knows the copyright laws. Many publishers don't even care. They don't worry about it themselves. They really don't expect anybody to copy their work or make any money even if they do. Were this all there was to it, the articles might be of little importance in this regard.

But there is another side...amateur comic strips. And while you may not care if somebody steals your stuff, somebody else may care if you, intentionally or not, are stealing his. Do you, Mr. Fanzine Publisher, know how far you can go using a character similar to one of Marvel's? Or what will be considered satire and what will not?

I didn't think so.

Hopefully this series of articles will give you at least an introduction to the copyright laws and because we will using cases dealing with comics and cartoons, the introduction may have some bearing on amateur publishers.

●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

Perhaps the best way to start would be to see what protection one has with no copyright or when one has a copyright but can't quite claim an infringement of it. The case of Archie Comics Publications vs.American News Co. from 1953 is instructive.

In this case Archie was suing a competitor. Well, actually it wasn't a competitor, it was Archie's own distributor. It seems that American News also distributed two other books called STEVIE and MORTIE

(published by Harvey, whom Archie also sued), and Archie thought that this was unfair competition.

Now, mind you, Archie did not object to its distributor distributing other companies' comics or even other teenage comics. What Archie was claiming was that STEVIE and MORTIE were so similar in ALL aspects that the public might confuse them with Archie books. STEVIE and MORTIE were simply trying to get a free ride off the reputation and good will that Archie had built up over the years. Lawyers call this "passing off", an attempt to try and sell your goods by leading the public to believe they are somebody else's. And yes, passing off is very illegal.

The judge noted that all comics have basically the same form:

The books are all of the same size, in form of cartoon strips printed in color. The covers are of a glossy paper containing the name and a cartoon printed in bold colors. Seen at a distance of a few feet or looked at casually, they are indistinguishable.

The judge did admit though, that most of the readers knew the Archie characters by sight and could distinguish any others immediately. Therefore, as far as form went, there was no problem of confusion.

He then looked at content. He found the books both have the following in common:

The central character is a high school boy of somewhat more than average athletic ability and a considerable interest in the opposite sex chiefly centered on the belle of the class. His dominant trait, however, is a certain resourcefulness highly reminiscent of Tom Sawyer. His inamorata reciprocates his interest but her faith is constantly tried by a series of bizarre incidents which constitute the stories. The boy has a faithful friend whose interest in girls is completely overshadowed by an insatiable appetite for food. There is a secondary girl who pursues the hero with varying success. Also there is another boy in many ways more attractive than the centralcharacter, also attracted to the leading girl. He has a marked dislike for the central character with which one can sympathize especially as he has no defense to the other's trickeries. There are various characters—the school principal, a woman teacher and the proprietor of a soda fountain patronized by these characters. As distinctions in the ARCHIE comic, the parents of Archie are more highly characterized while in the other the secondary girl and the soda dispenser are given national backgrounds, French and Italian, respectively. Also the leading and secondary girls are reversed as to coloring—in one the leader is brunette, in the other blonde. Perhaps the only plot element not common to both is that in the MORTIE and STEVIE comics the school teacher has designs on the principal which element, made comic because from her representation this lady should long since have renounced such aspirations, is lacking in the older cartoon.

He also noted that the plots were all different but that they could appear as easily in one book as another.

Okay. What do you think? Unfair competition? If you answered yes...think again.

The judge voted (correctly) that an author or publisher does not have rights in a KIND of character, only in a specific character. Using of a general idea is not unfair competition unless it amounts to violating a copyright, and as you remember Archie was not claiming a copyright violation. Ergo, Archie lost.

Had Magazine Enterprizes and Harvey Publications, the people who brought out MORTIE and STEVIE, respectively, called their characters by the same name, this would have been unfair competition. But it also would have amounted to copyright violation.

So what's the moral? What protection do you have if somebody doesn't go quite far enough to violate a copyright? Well you can grit your teeth. Or you can take heart from Archie. The marketplace may do the job for you. ARCHIE is still around. If you want to see a copy of STEVIE or MORTIE you can go buy one from a dealer or look in Overstreet. They lasted nine issues between them.

And Now, a Word from Our...

ron kienzle

Last issue, I had a short STAR WARS quiz. This issue I have a few corrections to add to that short quiz.

Question 3 should have read Total number of living Jawas in movie.

Question 7 should have read How many NAMED humanoid women were shown in the film.

All the above proves that I am not perfect.

Now here are the answers:

1...five
2...five
3...ten
4...four
5...James Earl Jones
6...Scot
7...four
8...two (Princess Leia and Aunt Beru)
9...Twin Ion Engined Fighter
10..TK
11..X and Y wing
12..X wing
13..No, remember that Vader could find no body.
14..England, Tunesia, and Southern California.
15..Sith

At the moment of this writing, I am in the midst of finishing my last few papers, and on the way of receiving, I hope, my Master's Degree. By the time this is published, I should be the proud holder of a Masters of Public and International Affairs (that and 15¢ will buy me a bad cup of coffee). So, for nine months at least, I am finished with my educational experience. Anyone got a job for an unemployed masters studen (who is insane enough to apply for Doctorate Program)?

Well, back to comics. As residen club members (who attend clu meetings) know, Ben has asked us t come in an hour early to talk abou comics. Since this is part of the reaso the club was established, it does mak sense. We got around to Roy Thomas current handling of CONAN. Ro seems to be getting a little tired in hi writing. He seems stuck on one story line: CONAN is going through a city o forest or jungle or desert. He runs into comely lass. She is either evil and get the Cimmerian in trouble or "good" an in need of aid. One way or another, sh gets the barbarian into a fight or series of fights. The tale ends wit CONAN winning and, if the lass i "good", he gets the girl. It has become boring.

Yet the color version of SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN is different CONAN does not meet a comely lass He does not even have it out with the villian. He allows the man wh butchered his men go free. The story i more than "win the battle". It is a story of a man finding that his life is fo naught, that he has been living a lie. I is a story of a civilized man finding tha he is not so much "better" than a barbarian. Not only does Dom Castillius, alias Basque the Butcher discover this, but Bigomba, the black chief, also discovers it, to his death.

This is CONAN at his best. Maybe it is time for Thomas to let someone else

script the color CONAN. He could keep plotting the book, allowing a fair amount of leeway for the scripter. He could keep writing the SAVAGE SWORD stories. No one can stay with one character forever. Even Stan Lee eventually gave up the FANTASTIC FOUR. Over eighty issues may be too much for Thomas, especially considering the other CONAN stories in SAVAGE SWORD and the giant-size issues plus the added burden of a comic strip version.

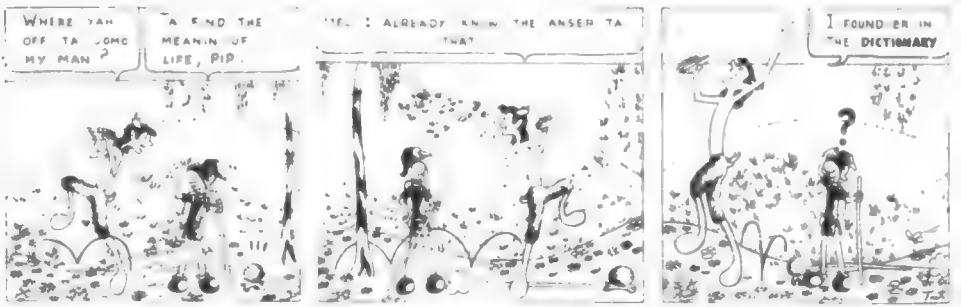
It is my opinion that most of the best books now being published are group books, specifically the AVENGERS, the X-MEN, and the JSA in ALL-STAR COMICS. Shooter, Claremont, and Levitz are clearly good writers, although Levitz tends to be uneven, with his best work appearing in ALL—STAR. But I think it is more. There is a special interaction that takes place (or can take place) between characters with super powers. Certainly the romance between Cyclops and Phoenix is different than Peter Parker's romance with either Gwen or Mary Jane. Supporting characters cannot relate to super-heroes the same way that fellow super-heroes can. Jimmy Olsen and Lois Lane are Superman's friends. But they can't share the loneliness of super powers. Anyone who is more than human is unique. They have fears that only super powered beings can understand. When handled by good writers, the group books have a potential far beyond any. If they only sell...

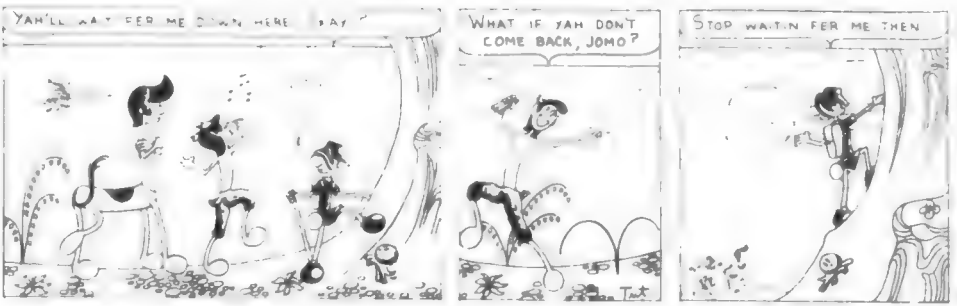
MERCY VAN VLACK

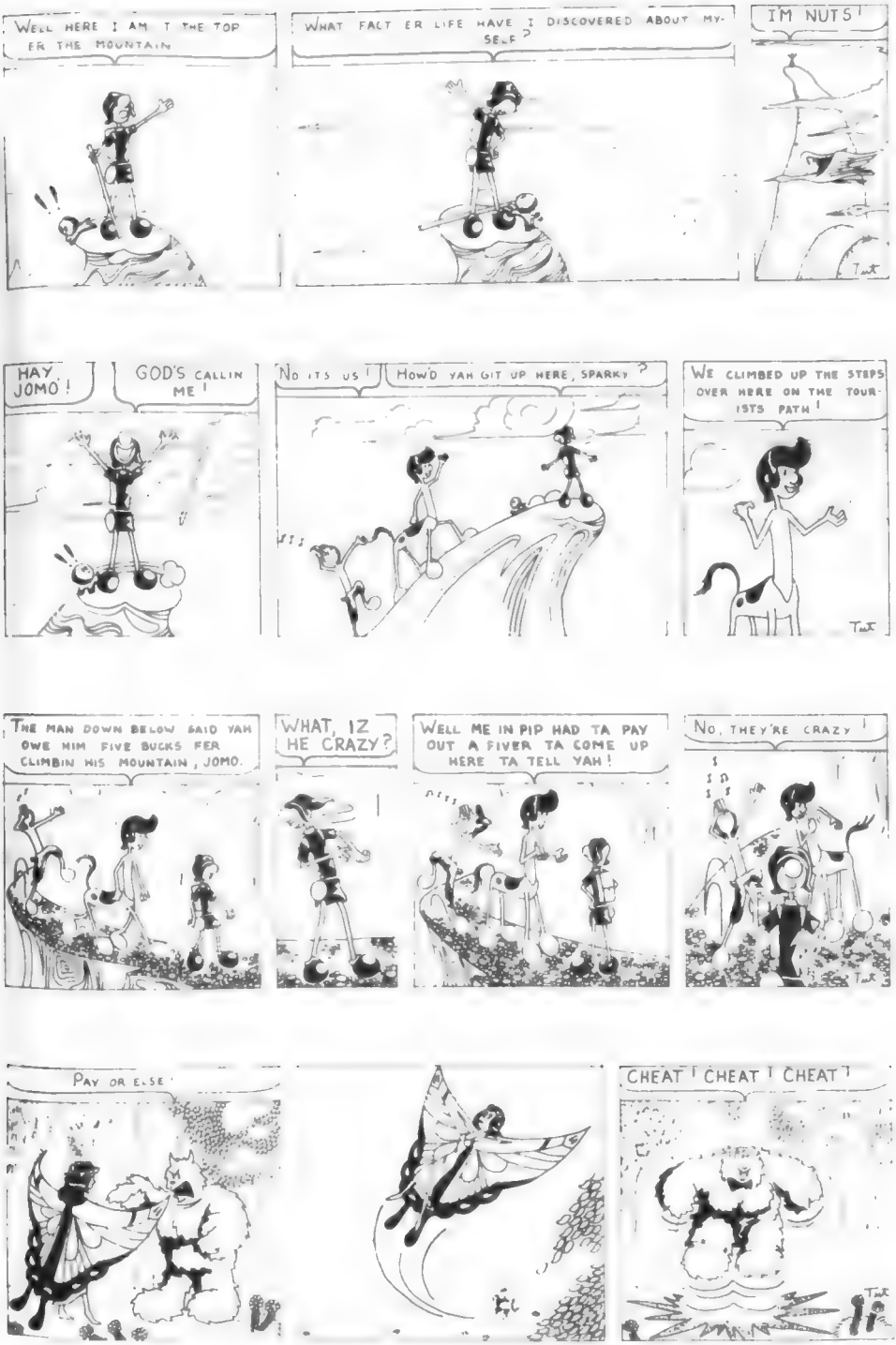
PITTCON '78
APRIL 28, 29, 30
HOTEL WEBSTER HALL

TOM TUTTLE

When I first moved to Pittsburgh and joined the Pittsburgh Comix Club in March of 1974 (my god! it's four years already), Tom Tuttle was one of the first people I met. I feel he has a style and feeling for and in his work, that is totally his. The strips printed here are probably rather old (I can't say because they were in the inventory file that Editor Emeritus Mark Lerer sent me). And Tom's work has come a long way since then. But they are too good to just lay around unseen. Enjoy them.






WELL HERE I AM T THE TOP ER THE MOUNTAIN
WHAT FACT ER LIFE HAVE I DISCOVERED ABOUT MY-SELF?
IM NUTS!
HAY JOMO!
GOD'S CALLIN ME!
NO ITS US!
HOW'D YAH GIT UP HERE, SPARKY?
WE CLIMBED UP THE STEPS OVER HERE ON THE TOURISTS PATH!
THE MAN DOWN BELOW SAID YAH OWE HIM FIVE BUCKS FER CLIMBIN HIS MOUNTAIN, JOMO.
WHAT, IZ HE CRAZY?
WELL ME IN PIP HAD TA PAY OUT A FIVER TA COME UP HERE TA TELL YAH!
NO, THEY'RE CRAZY!
PAY OR ELSE!
CHEAT! CHEAT! CHEAT!

PARTING SHOTS

Next issue will be our big PITTCON issue. Plans now call for our biggest issue ever. Right now it looks like Tom Hegeman's copyright series will be part of it, and hopefully I can persuade Tom Tuttle and the Cartooneers to make a return appearance.

●●●●●●●●●

1978 is here and it will be the year of the SUPERMAN. DC made a startling resurgence in 1977 under Jenette Kahn, and I really feel that they will continue onward and upward in '78. The SUPERMAN movie isn't going to hurt either.

●●●●●●●●●

RECOMMENDED

This is a new section of this column. I don't want to plug any publications, just recommend those I feel are worthwhile. No addresses will be listed. So you have to go find it on your own. Anything sent to me for the specific reason of being included in this column will be ignored.

The Spirit Portfolio

Eleven beautiful color plates by Will Eisner make this the finest portfolio ever packaged. It is vintage Eisner, printed beautifully and wrapped up in a very nice hardboard slipcase. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

The Golden Age of Tarzan

The $150.00 price tag makes this an item out of most collectors' range. Still the color printing and design are beautiful and make it almost worth the price. Everytime I look at it though I find myself wishing it was Foster's PRINCE VALIANT.

Edgar Rice Burroughs Library of Illustration

Anything by Russ Cochran is highly recommended by me. He's one of the few people to care enough to go to this extent to bring out a quality series. It is expensive but well worth the price, especially if you're a Burroughs fanatic.

Superboy and the Legion of Superheroes All-new Limited Collector's Edition no.L-55

Mike Grell's penciling looks rushed and awkward in spots and Vince Colletta's inking doesn't help. But Levitz's story is top-drawer Legion and proves why he is DC's best writer.

Comics Journal 38

Gil Kane interview. Kane is honest and provacative and Groth's usually intelligent questions provide some interesting answers. The rest of the magazine is good also with an excellent article on ASTERIX. However ignore the piece by Paul Dushkind on CRIMMERS. The piece is pompous and high-handed and comes off sounding like it was written for some pseudo-intellectual magazine like CRIMMER'S.

BEN RUIZ

NEXT ISSUE:

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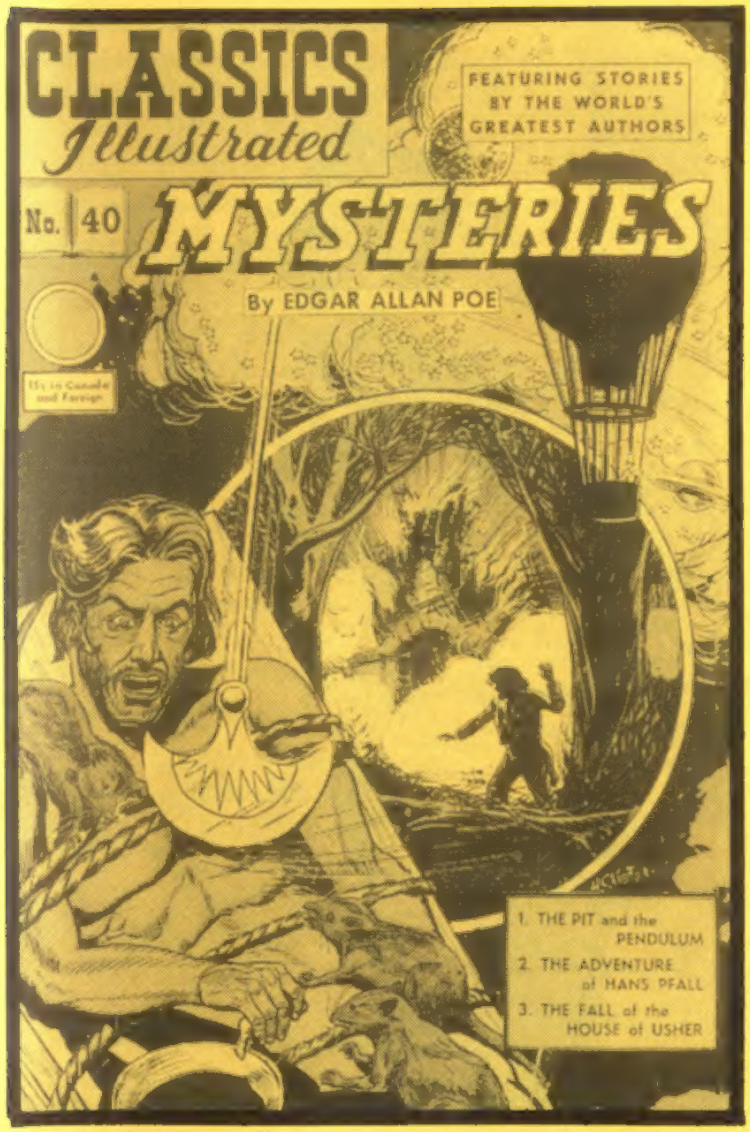
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The Classics: the forgotten comic

by Michael Sawyer

see page 3

ALSO: STAN LEE AT CREATION

COMICS AND THE COURTS